

## Press Release Geneva

Geneva | +41 22 908 4814 | Marie-Béatrice Morin | [marie-beatrice.morin@sothebys.com](mailto:marie-beatrice.morin@sothebys.com)  
London | +44 (0)20 7293 6000 | Simon Warren | [simon.warren@sothebys.com](mailto:simon.warren@sothebys.com)  
Kelly Signorelli-Chaplin | [kelly.schaplin@sothebys.com](mailto:kelly.schaplin@sothebys.com)

## SOTHEBY'S GENEVA SALE OF MAGNIFICENT & NOBLE JEWELS PRESENTS

### **The Most Important Emerald and Diamond Tiara** to come to auction in 30 years

and

### **A Superb Pink Diamond**



A magnificent and extremely rare emerald and diamond tiara, *circa* 1900, formerly in the Collection of Princess Katharina Henckel von Donnersmarck  
Est. CHF 4.6-9.2 million/\$5-10 million

Following Sotheby's Geneva \$105 million world record sale last November, in which the "Graff Pink" sold for \$46 million – the highest price ever achieved at auction for a diamond and any jewel\* – Sotheby's Geneva 17<sup>th</sup> May sale of Magnificent & Noble Jewels will be spearheaded by the most important emerald and diamond tiara to have appeared at auction in over 30 years and a superb pink diamond. The sale also comprises jewels of noble provenance, an impressive array of white diamonds and coloured gemstones, in addition to period jewels and creations signed by the world's greatest jewellers.

Commenting on the forthcoming sale, **David Bennett, Chairman of Sotheby's Jewellery Department for Europe and the Middle East** said: "Few jewels evoke more vividly the splendour and glamour of the Belle Epoque era than the truly magnificent tiara we will present in May. It is not difficult to imagine the awe that the appearance of Princess Katharina would have inspired, dressed in her finest silks and crowned by this halo of lavish and regal emerald drops. For me this is possibly the grandest jewel that we have offered for sale in over 30 years - in fact since it last appeared at auction at Sotheby's in Zurich in 1979. It took my breath away the first time I saw it back then, and it has lost none of its power with the passage of time".

## NOBLE JEWELS

Jewels of noble provenance are fragments of history, epitomising the splendour of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century European courts and of the opulence of 20<sup>th</sup> century aristocracy. A union of exceptional quality, exemplary craftsmanship and historical significance, these iconic jewels are increasingly sought after.

Continuing Sotheby's long-standing tradition of offering noble jewels, Sotheby's fifth dedicated sale in Geneva will be led by a **magnificent and extremely rare Emerald and Diamond Tiara**, the most important to have appeared at auction in over 30 years<sup>1</sup> (illustrated right and on p.1). Estimated at CHF 4.6-9.2 million (\$5-10 million), this sumptuous diadem is composed of 11 exceptionally rare Colombian emerald pear-shaped drops which weigh over 500 carats in total and may well have originally adorned the neck of a Maharajah. These emeralds are also believed to have been in the personal collection of Empress Eugénie.



This majestic tiara was commissioned *circa* 1900, possibly from the renowned jewelers Chaumet, by Guido Count von Henckel, First Prince von Donnersmarck, for his second wife Princess Katharina (illustrated left). At the height of *Belle Epoque*, court custom and etiquette in Europe required brilliant displays of jewellery to signify rank and social distinction. The tiara was de rigueur whenever royalty was present - at galas, state visits, opera, diplomatic receptions - and most women reserved their best stones for it.

Born in St. Petersburg, Katharina, "Rina" Slepzow (1862-1929) married Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck (1830-1916) in 1887. Created Prince by the Emperor Wilhelm II in 1901, Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck inherited vast estates and contributed to the development of the mining industry in Silesia. At the head of an immense fortune,

<sup>1</sup> Since Sotheby's previous offering of the same tiara on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1979.

he was also an astute politician who took part, alongside Bismarck, in the signing of the 1871 Franco-Prussian Peace Treaty. With his first wife, the courtesan known as La Païva (1819-1884), the Count had built a palace at Neudeck, on the Russian border, modelled on Versailles, where he and Princess Katharina would entertain the most famous names in Europe.

Whilst vastly different in characters, the two wives of Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck undoubtedly shared one enduring passion; their love for fabulous jewellery. Throughout their marriages to the Prince, La Païva and Princess Katharina both acquired truly spectacular gems and jewels and their collections were certainly on a par with those of many of the crowned heads of Europe and, in some cases, may well have exceeded them<sup>2</sup>.



Highlighting the Noble Jewels section are also jewels from the Collection of the Excelentísima Sra. Condesa vda. de Romanones. A Grande de España, the Countess of Romanones has led a life of adventure, mystique and glamour, inspiring many of her best-selling novels.

Born Marie Aline Griffith Dexter in Pearl River NY, she was recruited to become an OSS agent in Madrid during World War II before marrying Don Luis de Figueroa y Perez de Guzmán el



Bueno, Count of Quintanilla in 1947. Hosting some of the most lavish parties of the time, the Countess of Romanones counted in her vast and eclectic circle world

leaders, members of the European aristocracy as well as key players in Hollywood.



Encapsulating the magnificent poise of the Countess of Romanones are **an emerald and diamond demi-parure from the 1960s** (est. CHF 100,000-150,000/ \$103,000-147,000, illustrated left), **a ruby and diamond necklace/brooch combination from the 1970s** (est. CHF 80,000-150,000/ \$81,500-147,000) and **a pair of ruby and diamond pendant earrings, 1950s** (est. CHF 14,000-18,000/ \$15,000-20,000) (both illustrated above).

<sup>2</sup> In Geneva on the 17 May 2007, Sotheby's sold the "Donnersmarck diamonds", two important and magnificent fancy intense yellow diamonds for almost CHF 10 million: one a cushion-shaped stone weighing 102.54 carats and the other a matching pear-shaped diamond weighing 82.48 carats.



Testament to the Countess' close relationship to the Duke and the **Duchess of Windsor** is an important **"Cadenas" diamond bracelet/watch**, gifted to the Countess by the Duchess herself (illustrated left). Dating *circa* 1936, this exquisite piece signed Van Cleef & Arpels was purchased the same year by Wallis Simpson (est. CHF 46,000-63,000/ \$49,900-68,500). Documenting



the first years of perhaps the greatest love story of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the reverse of the watch case is engraved with a facsimile of the Duke of Windsor's handwriting, then King Edward VIII: *"For their 3 anniversary, 12.III.36, and our Tub, 17.III.36"* (illustrated right).



Following the success of a group of 20 jewels and precious objects formerly in the Collection of **The Duchess of Windsor**, in London in November<sup>3</sup>, May's sale will feature further pieces with the same illustrious provenance.

Formerly auctioned in the 1987 legendary Geneva auction of "The Jewels of the Duchess of Windsor" – still the most valuable single-owner jewellery collection ever sold<sup>4</sup> – a **pair of sapphire and diamond ear clips, made by Cartier circa 1950** comes back on the market with an estimate of CHF 37,000-55,000/ \$40,000-60,000 (illustrated right).



Also by Cartier, one of the most favoured jewelers of the Windsors is an **ivory, sapphire and diamond brooch dating from circa 1960** and gifted by the Duchess to Oonagh Shanley-Toffolo, the nurse chosen to take care of the Duke of Windsor during his final illness. Featuring a miniature carnation, the Duke's favourite flower, this brooch carries an estimate of CHF 12,000-18,000/\$13,000-20,000 (illustrated left).

<sup>3</sup> The London sale brought a total of £7,975,550/\$12,413,146 / €9,459,004.

<sup>4</sup> The Jewels of the Duchess of Windsor were offered for auction by Sotheby's in Geneva on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1987 for the benefit of the Institut Pasteur. Announced on 12 December 1986, 50 years to the day the King of England abdicated the throne, the two day sale sold all 306 lots offered and fetched CHF 75.4 million (\$50 million/£31 million), well above the \$7 million pre-sale estimate.



The Noble Jewels section is also highlighted by 19<sup>th</sup> century jewellery. Characteristic of the lush combination of stones and enamel found in the jewels of the Romantic period are a **garnet, enamel and diamond bracelet and a pendant that once belonged to the Collection of Madame Moitessier**, born Marie-Clotilde-Inès de Foucauld (1821-1897).

Described by the French poet and novelist Théophile Gautier as “*Junolike*”, Madame Moitessier was immortalised wearing the bracelet in a portrait by Ingres completed in 1856, today in the Collection of the National Gallery, London (illustrated right). Initially reluctant to paint a simple portrait and not the historical subjects he was celebrated for, Ingres changed his mind after being struck by Madame Moitessier’s “*terrible et belle tête*” (“*terrible and beautiful head*”). Dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the bracelet and pendant carry an estimate of CHF 26,000-38,000/ \$28,000– 41,000 (illustrated above).



Typical of the naturalism flourishing in jewellery in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is a **ruby and diamond pendant dating from the 1850s**. Property of a European noble family, this large corsage ornament centering a Burmese ruby carries an estimate of CHF 50,000-80,000/ \$55,000 – 85,000 (illustrated left).

Enjoying the same provenance is a fine example of *fin de siècle* jewellery: a **diamond rivièrè from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century** designed as a graduated row of 38 diamonds, the largest one weighing 10.10 carats (est. CHF 300,000-500,000/ \$326,000-545,000, illustrated right).



## MAGNIFICENT JEWELS

At the heart of the Magnificent Jewels section is a group of diamonds and colored gemstones, the centerpiece of which is an important pink diamond, weighing 10.99 carats (illustrated below).

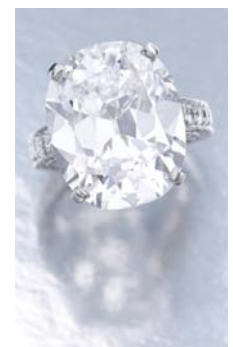


Pink diamonds have been prized for their rarity and spectacular beauty ever since they were first discovered in the mines of India centuries ago. This superb stone, mounted as a ring, has been graded “fancy intense pink”, natural colour and VS1 clarity by the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). It has been further assessed to be part of a very rare subgroup of diamonds known as type IIa and comprising less than 2% of all of the world’s gem diamonds. Stones in this group are chemically the purest of all diamond crystals and often have extraordinary optical transparency. The beauty and rarity of this outstanding diamond also lies in its cut and shape. It features a classic emerald cut, a style of cutting normally associated with white diamonds and immensely sought-after when found in rare colours such as pink and blue. Estimated at CHF 8.3-14.8 million (\$9-16 million), this stone is being offered for sale from a private collection and has not appeared on the market for more than 30 years.

## White diamonds

The sale will also comprise a group of exceptional white diamonds which are D colour – the finest color grading for white diamonds. Among those are signed pieces, including an attractive diamond ring by GRAFF, set with a cushion-shaped brilliant-cut internally flawless

diamond weighing 16.53 carats (est. CHF 1,380,000-2,300,000/ \$1,500,000-2,500,000, illustrated right) and a diamond ring by M. Gerard, featuring a marquise-shaped diamond weighing 15.76 carats (est. CHF 830,000-1,500,000/ \$900,000-1,600,000, illustrated left).



Another standout piece in this group is an **impressive unmounted heart-shaped diamond weighing 16.98 carats** (Est. CHF 920,000-1,380,000/ \$1,000,000-1,500,000, illustrated left) and a **pair of spinel and diamond earrings**, each suspending a pear-shaped diamond drop weighing respectively 7.27 and 8.78 carats (CHF 1,105,000-1,655,000/ \$1,200,000-1,800,000, illustrated right).



## Coloured Gemstones



The offering of coloured stones will be led by an exceptionally large assortment of Kashmir sapphires, the finest sapphires in the world. Known for their intense and vivid blue hue (Kashmir Blue), these stones of extreme rarity were discovered after an earthquake-induced landslide in the 1880s and subsequently mined for eight years before the deposit's exhaustion. Fine examples of Kashmir sapphires are found in a **sapphire and diamond ring**, set with an octagonal step-cut sapphire weighing 8.74 carats and dating from *circa* 1930 (est. CHF 230,000-315,000/\$250,000-340,000); an **attractive sapphire and diamond brooch** designed as stylised floral spray (est. CHF 185,000-370,000/ \$200,000-400,000, illustrated right), and a **pair of sapphire and diamond pendant ear clips**, suspending a cushion-sapphire weighing 7.30 and 7.07 carats respectively (CHF 185,000-370,000/ \$200,000-400,000, illustrated left).



Completing this selection of coloured gemstones are two impressive Burmese rubies. The first - a **spectacular 30.20 carat cushion-shaped ruby, mounted as a ring** - is estimated at CHF 1,850,000 - 3,650,000 / \$2,000,000-4,000,000 (illustrated left), while the second - a **29.40 carat oval ruby mounted as a ring by Cartier** - is offered for sale with an estimate of CHF 920,000-1,850,000 / \$1,000,000- 2,000,000.

Discovered in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Colombian emeralds exhibit the most vivid green, as exemplified in a **superb emerald and diamond ring, set with an octagonal step-cut Colombian emerald weighing 12.03 carats** (est. CHF 460,000-735,000/ \$500,000-800,000, illustrated right). "*Natural emeralds from Colombia of this size and quality represent a great rarity*" and this gemstone has been described by the SSEF laboratory as "*a very exceptional treasure*".



## Fine period and signed jewels



The sale also features a wide range of fine period jewels and creations signed by the world's greatest jewelers. This spring no fewer than 50 of Cartier's stylish creations are featured alongside 39 jewels by Van Cleef & Arpels, as well as 35 items by Bulgari and a selection of jewels by Boucheron, Buccellati, Caldwell, Chanel, Chaumet, Chopard, Dali, Graff, Gübelin, Harry Winston, Hemmerlé, JAR, Laliue, M. Gérard, Marina B, Mauboussin, Michele della Valle, René Boivin, Alexandre Reza, Tiffany & Co., Schlumberger and Webb.

Period jewels in the auction are highlighted by fine examples of Art Deco jewellery. Characteristic of the geometrical style of the 1920s is a **gem-set and diamond sautoir/brooch dating from the 1920s**. Sautoirs were perhaps the most typical jewels of this period and, as it is often the case, this example can be broken up to create other forms: a necklace and a brooch (est. CHF 65,000-90,000/\$70,000-100,000, illustrated above).



Also in vogue in the 1920s were band bracelets, which are represented in the sale by a **fine diamond bracelet created by Boucheron circa 1925**, the same year as the Paris exhibition of "Arts décoratifs et industriels modernes". Featuring Boucheron's stylised floral motifs, this museum piece carries an estimate of CHF 110,000-165,000/\$120,000-180,000 (illustrated above).

Transcending time, **Bulgari's** unmistakable creativity is displayed in a **sublime sapphire, ruby and diamond necklace** (est. CHF 150,000-180,000/ \$165,000-195,000,

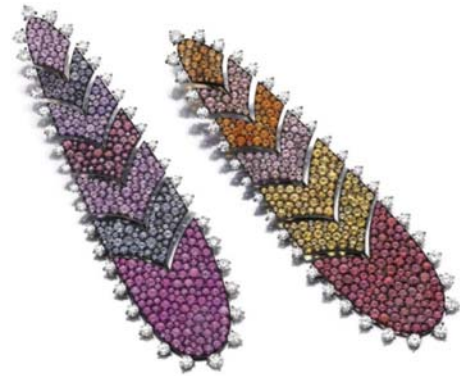


illustrated left), while **Van Cleef & Arpels'** extraordinary craftsmanship is



revealed in a **pair of fancy intense yellow diamond and diamond ear clips**, each centring on a cut-cornered square modified brilliant-cut fancy intense yellow diamond weighing respectively 5.51 and 5.87 carats (est. CHF 130,000-165,000/ \$140,000-180,000, illustrated right) and a **diamond brooch** from the 1950s (est. CHF 38,000-52,000/ \$42,000-56,000, illustrated p. 8).

Among the other great signatures in the sale is **JAR**, widely acknowledged as the most talented contemporary jewellery designer of his generation. Born in New York, Joel Arthur Rosenthal founded JAR in Paris in 1977 with his Swiss business partner Pierre Jeannot. Crossing the boundaries between ornamental jewels and sculpture, JAR has reinterpreted jewellery as an art form, as reflected in a **stunning pair of gem-set and diamond ear clips** (est. 95,000-185,000/ \$100,000-200,000, illustrated right).



The innovative design aesthetic and fine craftsmanship of JAR's unique creations are also magnificently reflected in a single owner collection comprising a **diamond ring, set with a marquise-shaped diamond of pink tint** (est. CHF 95,000-140,000/ \$100,000-150,000), a **diamond bangle** (est. CHF 48,000-85,000/ \$50,000-90,000, illustrated left) and a **diamond ring, featuring single-cut diamonds** (est. CHF 9,500-14,500/ \$10,000-15,000).

**\* Notes to editors:**

On 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Sotheby's Geneva set a world auction record for any diamond and any jewel when it sold the Graff Pink -- an exceptionally rare and truly magnificent Fancy Intense Pink diamond of the purest, vibrant hue, weighing 24.78 carats -- for \$46,158,674 (CHF 45,442,500). The 16<sup>th</sup> November sale totalled CHF 103,418,050 / US\$ 105,047,918 - the highest value jewellery auction ever held.

**MAGNIFICENT & NOBLE JEWELS**

**Sale**

**Hôtel Beau-Rivage, Geneva**

Session 1: Tuesday, 17 May 11, 10:00 AM

Session 2: Tuesday, 17 May 11, 2:00 PM

Session 3: Tuesday, 17 May 11, 7:00 PM

**Exhibition**

**Sotheby's Paris**, 26-28 April 2011

**Sotheby's London**, 4-5 May 2011

**Hôtel Beau-Rivage, Geneva**

Saturday, 14 May 11, 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday, 15 May 11, 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Monday, 16 May 11, 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Tuesday, 17 May 11, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM (selection of lots)



ALL PRESS RELEASES ARE PUBLISHED ON [WWW.SOTHEBYS.COM](http://WWW.SOTHEBYS.COM)  
IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

\*\* Pre-sale estimates do not include buyer's premium

Vente dirigée par le Ministère de Maîtres Claude Naville et Marco Breitenmoser, Huissiers Judiciaires .